



30 November 1995

Varðandi frumvarp til laga um mannanöfn, 73. mál, heildarlög

Alþingi

Alþingi Íslendinga
Allsherjarnefnd

*Erindi nr. Þ 120/279
komudagur 4/12 1995*

In response to your letter of 7 November, The Society of New Icelanders wishes to express its gratitude for the opportunity to comment on this important bill. We support the principle as so clearly stated in the bill, that the matter of a person's name is one of human rights and is fundamental to a person's identity.

While this bill would increase the rights of foreigners and those of foreign descent, we discussed two areas of concern that we would like to bring to your attention:

- ◆ *Chapter V, Article 10* would apply the law to a child born in Iceland of a foreign mother not married to the Icelandic father. How can Icelandic naming laws apply to a child that is denied Icelandic citizenship?
- ◆ *Chapter V, Article 12* would impose Icelandic naming laws on foreign nationals marrying Icelanders. For instance, in many countries it is the established custom for a woman to take her husband's last name, and not a derivative of that name.

Additionally, the concensus of opinion in our organization, which represents people from over twenty nations, is that it is a basic human right to name one's children as one pleases insofar as it is not an offensive name. We acknowledge that one of the motivating factors behind this bill is the advancement of human rights, and while it takes steps in this direction, we feel it still has some way to go in fully respecting the human rights of foreigners and Icelanders alike.

Respectfully,

Geoffrey Pettypiece
for the S.O.N.I. board